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ALEXANDER THE GREAT WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF DARIUS BY GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO Membership Funds, Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society

ALEXANDER AND THE DAUGHTERS OF DARIUS

BY GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO

The gift of a painting by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, through the membership funds of the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society, adds another Venetian work of superb, decorative splendor which will add to the High Renaissance room of the new building one of its most brilliant notes, and with the Tintoretto ceiling acquired some time ago, will help to give an adequate impression of the opulence of Venice during her golden age.

Tiepolo comes on the scene when the Queen of the Adriatic has reached the full fruition of her commercial wealth and artistic glory. For more than a century Venice has been building up an artistic climax beginning with the Bellini with their noble contributions to church decoration, tempered by that dignified restraint that characterizes all their works. Then burgeons forth the worldly luxuriance of Giorgione, Titian, Palma Vecchio and their contemporaries who, in their paintings portray the substantial life of a prosperous city. These giants of the Renaissance, encouraged by a generous patronage from the wealthy citizens of the republic who are, at the same time, building those palaces which give Venice its great charm, bring painting to its highest perfection and portray a very human Venice full of the joy of life and the abundance of material things. The XVI Century culminates in the energetic works of Tintoretto and Veronese, who were employed in the Herculean tasks of covering great areas on the walls of the public buildings and the halls of the commercial brotherhoods with those magnificent decorations which show all the pomp and splendor of the republic at the height of its wealth. During the centuries when Venice maintained her position as the trading center between Orient and Occident, she absorbed something of the pomp and ceremony of the Orient which, combined with her own colorful environment, developed an optimistic outlook upon life

which has never quite been equalled, and the exuberance and abundance of which leaves an unmistakable imprint on her art.

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, the last great master of the Venetian School of Painting, was born amidst these surroundings in 1696 and by the time he has served his apprenticeship with the painter, Lazzarini and perhaps with Piazetta, he enters upon his task with a sophistication and a technical equipment that is predicated on the gorgeous works of his great contemporaries. Having achieved great wealth the patrician families are taking their ease in the pursuit of pleasure, spending their large fortunes in extravagant pomp and luxury. The baroque style of architecture, with its over abundant embellishment, finds a counterpart in the painted adornment of the homes of its wealthy citizens.

Tiepolo divides his time in the execution of works for the Doge Carnaro, the noble Venetian families and the public buildings and churches in the provinces of northern Italy. Like his predecessors, he is gifted with the fine color and the decorative splendor which was instilled in the heart of every child through the festivals and the highly colored pageants with which the Venetians celebrated the anniversaries of their great events.

Tiepolo inherits from his immediate predecessors and particularly, Veronese, a sensitiveness to decoration, a knowledge of color and an assurance in covering great spaces. He is gifted with a fine imagination and a facility which he uses to good purpose both in the masterly stroke and in the passages of delicacy and finesse. His color is light and flaky and is possessed of that richness and harmony which characterizes Venetian painting at its best. If Tiepolo is sometimes more exuberant than Veronese he is, nevertheless, in perfect accord with the rococo spirit of the day. For nearly forty years he labored

assiduously, not only in Venice, but also in Wurzburg at the invitation of the Bishop of Wurzburg where his historical works and allegories show a remarkable knowledge of religious and classical themes. The last seven years of his life, from 1763-1770, he spent in Spain where he went at the behest of King Charles III.

His easel pictures show the same grace of form and charm of color as his frescoes and are generally more carefully composed and executed. The picture secured for Detroit is of this variety. It portrays Alexander the Great with the women of Darius. The incident chosen is the one after the Battle of Issus in 333 B. C. when

after Darius has fled, his mother, wife and three children fall into the hands of Alexander. The figure of the helmeted conqueror with the red robe thrown over his suit of armor, is scarcely more than that of a boy and is one of the handsomest portrayals of a youth that this writer has ever seen perpetuated on canvas. The expression of authority on the face of the conqueror is tempered by compassion for the four captive women who place themselves under his protection. It is altogether a charming subject beautifully portrayed.

C. H. B.

A BUST OF A FLORENTINE LADY

BY MINO DE FIESOLE

While the Art Institute struggled with the forming of a small collection of early Florentine paintings, a most unexpected gift of a marble bust by Mino de Fiesole (1431-1484) makes it possible to give at once an adequate idea of the great art of sculpture of the same period, and city. Mr. and Mrs. Edsel B. Ford, who only recently presented to the Art Institute a Persian silk rug of the highest quality, have added this wonderful piece of sculpture, helping to the advancement of the Museum collections in such a way as could never have been done with the limited funds at our disposal, for works of such importance and fame as the Italian marble busts of the XV Century representing young aristocratic women have been only within the reach of the greatest private collectors when in recent years they came into the market, and when acquired by public museums have been the gifts of such collectors as in the instance of the bust of Diotisalvi Neroni by Mino de Fiesole which was presented to the Louvre by Mr.G. Dreyfuss, the greatest collector of Renaissance sculptures in Europe, or the bust of St. John by the same artist which came into the possession of the Metropolitan Museum through the Altman bequest. The other busts of this kind which we find in the Museum at Florence, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna belong to the oldest possessions of these galleries. That we are able to compete with such great Museums in this special field is certainly most encouraging for all those who are interested in the growth of our Institute.

Three masters of the early Italian Renaissance are famous for these marble busts of young women, which have been imitated by innumerable artists in modern times, and of which the type was created in Florence in the middle of the XV Century. Desiderio da Settignano (1428-1464) whose five known marble busts of Marrietta Strozzi and other Florentine ladies adorn the Florence and Berlin Museums, and such private collections as the Pierpont Morgan, Widener, and Mackay collections; Mino de Fiesole, by whom we know now three female busts-our acquisition, the bust in the Berlin Museum, and the one from the Brauer collection now in the possession of Sir Joseph Duveen; and Laurana (1425-1508) an artist from Dalmatia who worked mostly in South Italy and executed the famous busts in the Louvre, the Berlin and Vienna Museums and in the collection of Thomas F. Ryan, of New York.





Two of these masters, Desiderio and Mino, belong to the city of Florence, which has produced the greatest series of master sculptors in the history of art within the short period of one century: the series which includes such artists as Donatello, the Della Robbias, Desiderio, Rossellino, Verrocchio, Pollaiuolo, Benedetto da Majano, and Mino da Fiesole, to mention only the most important ones of the XV Century who lead up to Michelangelo.

Mino da Fiesole, the pupil of Desiderio, is not less famous for his portrait busts than for his magnificent large marble tombs and Madonna reliefs. No one who has visited the churches of Florence and surroundings will forget the enchanting impressions created by his works in the little Badia church opposite the Museo Nazionale or by the tomb of Bishop Salutati in the Cathedral at Fiesole. Later when Mino came to Rome, asked by Pope Pius II to execute a pulpit for S. Pieter, he received so many orders in the Eternal City that he had to employ pupils who unfortunately through uneven execution of his works have done harm to his reputation; in recent times it has been found through documents that several of those works in Rome which were not up to his standard have been executed by a minor artist of similar name under his influence, by Mino del Reame. The greatest sculptures of our artist have been produced in Florence, and like most of his portrait busts, our acquisition belongs to his early period, dating most likely from the end of the 1450's or the first half of the 1460's. His male busts which as Dr. Bode points out rightly are almost more individual and powerful than those of Rossellino or Benedetto da Majano, are preserved in the Paris, Berlin, and Florence public collections and in this country in the Widener collection at Philadelphia. Among them one is of special interest to us-the Berlin bust of Niccolo Strozzi, the great banker of Florence who through the intrigues of other financial leaders was banished from the city. Our bust, belonging formerly

to one of the oldest families in Florence, the Giuccardini's was in the tradition of the family always regarded as the protrait of a Strozzi, to whom they were nearly related. The bust of Niccolo Strozzi is dated 1454; less than a decade later Desiderio executed the two famous busts of Marietta Strozzi, the daughter of Lorenzo di Palla Strozzi. Most likely Mino became acquainted through his master Desiderio with the Strozzi's, whose palace in Florence is the most beautiful one of the early Renaissance in this city.

Although in our bust the influence of Desiderio is still visible, it has at the same time all the qualities of the best works of Mino; the rare combination of grace and dignity, of intense realism and conventionalization in form and lines;-the curious contrast so typical of his works, between the clear cut planes in every part of the face and the beautifully soft flowing waves of the hair, between the sharp straight lines of the garment and the delicate ripples of the border of the skirt. Very characteristic is the way the pupils of the eyes are designed as a round hole surrounded by a circle, the rather large ears with the wide inner shell, the vibrating nostrils. Most wonderful is the very Florentine precise and energetic draughtmanship of the artist as revealed especially in the fine and clear profile with the naively protruding upper lip, the beautifully drawn line of nose and forehead and the exquisitely modelled neck whose back contour is nicely led into the lines of the ribbons bound around the hair. With this beauty of the forms preserving in a most perfect realization a youthful life of hundreds of years ago, is combined the beauty of the spirit of the period which unconsciously entered the soul of the artist and his model, the spirit of optimism and self-consciousness, of a restrained joy in life and enthusiasm for a new aristocratic culture which should become the culture of the society of modern times.

EARLY FLORENTINE PAINTINGS

During the last season the Art Institute succeeded in building up a small collection of paintings from the earliest and most mediaeval of the Italian Renaissance Schools, the School of Siena. In the endeavor to have the whole art of the Italian Renaissance adequately represented, the school to follow next should be the one of Florence, the most famous and powerful of all. The unornamental and severe style of the Florentines forms a vivid contrast to the more lyrically gifted Sienese artists with their fine sense for decorative patterns and delicate color

was at its end, with the decline of the XV Century, the Florentine still fostered or produced some of the greatest masters the world has ever known, such as Raphael, Leonardo, and Michaelangelo.

With the three paintings the Art Institute has been able to acquire recently, an attempt has been made to give an idea of the first stage of Florentine painting, the Gothic art of the XIV Century from Giotto to Masaccio.

The earliest painting (reproduced in the catalogue of the Heilbuth Collection at Copenhagen, and formerly in the Sterpini



FLORENTINE TRIPTYCH (About 1340) Center panel, Madonna and Saints; right wing, The Nativity; left wing, The Crucifixion

schemes. In the Florentine School we find all these strong qualities which guaranteed a long duration of the School as well as a broad influence over all Italy:—the dramatic energy and forceful draughtmanship, the sense of weight and volume in the single figures as well as in the whole composition, an indefatigable aim to conquer all means necessary for a realistic rendering of nature through the study of perspective and anatomy, of naturalistic lighting and of individual characterization in portraiture. When the Sienese School

Collection at Ferrara) is a triptych representing the enthroned Madonna with Saints, in the center, and the Crucifixion and the Nativity on the wings. The center has been tentatively attributed to Bernardo Daddi; the wings, which, however, seem to be by the same hand, to an artist closely related to Taddeo Gaddi. But considering the difficulties in the differentiation of the style of the immediate followers of Giotto, we are satisfied that we have before us a Florentine work dating about 1340 and still breathing the

great church style of the innovator of Italian Painting, Giotto. As in most early Florentine pictures, we feel even in the small compass of the triptych the connection with the large frescoes from which these paintings started, and in the composition as well as in the color an unusually fine symphonic effect is created, with apparently simple means. The vertical lines of the composition, the floaring position of the saints around the throne, give a beautiful feeling of lightness and radiant elation, and the combination of delicate pink, light blue, orange and black tones shows a sense of rhythm which is even stronger in color than in design. While the dignified frontal attitude of the Madonna, and the direct, passionate expression in the Crucifixion are still quite in the style of Giotto, we find already certain elements of the advanced Trecento art, such as the playing movements of the Child, the genre-motives in the scene of the Nativity, and in the attempt to create the effect of night in the illumination of the rocks.

To the end of the XIV Century, we progress with the Madonna and Child of Mariotto di Nardi, a Florentine painter who, although he lived as long as 1425, still belongs according to his style to the art of the Trecento. Although his art shows to some degree the relaxation characteristic of the end of the XIV Century, this decorative panel with its rich ornamental details and soft flowing outlines shows the high level of Florentine art even at that period. The tendency toward a more earthly interpretation of the holy subjects with the advancement of art can be seen in the nearer relation of Mother and Child, in the realistic manner in which the Madonna is playing with the Child. While the upper contours of the group show the broadness and simplicity of the early Florentine style the increasing richness of flowing curves in the garments of the Madonna are characteristic of the end of the Gothic in the stage of transition to the early Renaissance of the XV Century.



MADONNA AND CHILD BY MARIOTTO DI NARDI

Mariotto di Nardi must have been well appreciated by his contemporaries, as he worked for the Florentine Cathedral in 1398 and 1405, and appraised, together with Lorenzo Monaco, frescoes executed by Ambrogio di Baldese. In this country he is represented in two wings in the Yale collection, and in a charming triptych in the possession of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

It is just as unlikely that the Institute will come into the possession of a work by Masaccio, the first great master of the XV Century, as it is that we will acquire a work by Giotto, as all of the known works of Masaccio and Giotto are in churches or public institutions. It was, however, very fortunate that we were able to add to our collection an unknown work by the master of Masaccio—Masolino (1383-1440), the



THE TRINITY BY MASOLINO (1383-1440)

artist who with his great pupil executed the famous frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel at Florence, which stand at the beginning of the Renaissance painting. The picture representing the Trinity, although it shows still the flowing late-Gothic lines of this master of the period of transition, has yet all the monumentality characteristic of the great Masaccio's epoch. We understand also from this picture why the works of Masolino and Masaccio have been confused since the time of Vasari, although the temperament of these two artists, very well characterizedby G. B. Berenson, is very different. The type of Christ, even to the

details of the contour of the legs, is very similar to the one in the wonderful "Crucifixion" in San Clemente in Rome, which by some connoisseurs is attributed to Masaccio, but which has been ascribed correctly to Masolino by B. Berenson. The much less energetic forms of Masolino are, however, very obvious in the type of God Father, whose round shaped head with the eyes standing far apart is most characteristic of him. Also, his decorative sense appears to much advantage in the arrangement of the clouds-so similar to the delightful panels in the Naples Museum-and in the pattern of the golden backgrounds.

Masolino may be compared to Fra Angelico in his position in Florence between two centuries and two epochs, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. He has a similar fine feeling for Gothic rhythm and lines, a similar decorative sense and similar joyful color schemes. While, however, his sentiment is not as deeply religious as Fra Angelico's; and his tendency goes more toward daintiness and worldliness, his importance for the advancement of style in Florence is, on account of his connection with Masaccio. even greater. We know three series of frescoes by him in Castiglione D'Olona, in Florence (Brancacci Chapel) and in Rome (S. Clemente), but his panel paintings are very rare: in this country he is represented by a most enchanting Annunciation in the Henry Goldman Collection, of New York, and by a Madonna in the Theodore Davis Collection, exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum.

W. R. V.

TWO PAINTINGS BY ODILON REDON

The creation of beauty from chaos is suggested in the two paintings of butterfly themes by Odilon Redon recently added to the permanent collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts. In them appear visions of the mind's eye, of beauty in the spiritual world. He paints from his soul transcending the bounds of the earthly.

The smaller picture portrays a neutral area from which a coral, vibrating field spreads like light from dull grey dawn. Against it float butterflies with wings of amber, emerald, amethyst, lapis or turquoise. Their gossamer is soft as a breath of balmy air.

The other panel is busier. From undulating, dynamic chaos appear creations of bright fresh life, jewels discovered in the dross whose perfectly patterned forms quiver with the iridescence of crushed gems in many colors.

Such pictures are transcendental dreams rather than objective realities, still appealing emotionally through the eye, however. Redon always remembered that he was painting a picture, regretting that he was not a still greater master of construction. He could draw skillfully, but it was the

"Melancholie" of Durer to which he went for inspiration, that great print expressive of an abstract idea, of man's destiny in the universal scheme. To him exist tence was realized in the visual only aftethe mind had added thereto its imagination and experiences of the past.

The scientist can explain his world and his discoveries; the artist interprets or suggests his belief and faith in the universal rhythm. The one writes in prose, the second in poetry. It is not surprising to learn that Odilon Redon still more completely expressed himself by music. His colorful compositions often fantasmagorique in conception, are like transcripts of tone-poems. The terms applied to both music and patterns of color are often interchangeable; the two arts affect one emotionally. This painter has been placed first among the colorists of France, the decorative apparitions recall, now enamels or mosaics in their gem-like sparkle and, again, old Oriental fabrics or faience of quiet, mellow lustre.

Odilon Redon was born at Bordeaux in 1840. His father's accounts of the vast savannas and forests in the region of New



PAINTING BY ODILON REDON

Orleans, near his early home, helped to create romantic visions in the mind of Odilon. The strange, solitary and infinite inspired his young imagination. He became a recluse living more and more exclusively with his music and drawings. His regret was that he was not born at sea, "un lieu sans patrie sur un abime." He was intensely emotional and dissatisfied with the lack of perfection in the world.

At fifteen he began to study drawing. After failing in architectural endeavor, he became Gerome's pupil. Of course, the ideals of teacher and student were as far apart as the poles. Redon turned to work in black and white. At the suggestion of Fantin Latour he commenced his series of lithographs, often copying his paintings. Persons have called these lithographs macabre and fantastic, "translations of nightmares to art."They included "Dreaming" "To Edgar Allan Poe," "Origins," "Night" and "The Apocalypse of Saint John."

He spent long hours in perfecting his technique of drawing and of color with which he became interested in the '90's. He studied flowers with the botanist Clavanol, later carefully drawing such subjects, but in a fanciful way. In fact, herein one sees a rather Japanesque manner. The Frenchman is always fresh, joyous and spontaneous, painting a simple bouquet

of poppies and daisies, or asters and phlox with indefinable grace, and an understanding of the spirit of flowers as his delicate line, light and pastel shades reveal.

Mural decoration and Gobelin Tapestry designs, as well as over two hundred thirty prints in etching and lithography, indicate a great range and variety of work, not to mention the oils and pastels. A number of important exhibits abroad and in this country as well as the many examples owned by galleries including the Luxembourg with its "Yeux clos" have firmly established his reputation.

He began conservatively, later turning to neo-impressionism. After that he became a "Fauve," a "Wild Man," in company with Derain, Vlaminck and Dufy (all to be seen in the Art Institute). By his still more ideal, abstract manner in company with Van Gogh, whose self portrait is also in Detroit, he became identified with the developed Post-Impressionists.

It was a great loss when Redon died at Paris in 1916. He always retained enough of the material to appeal visually the while he more nearly approached a spiritual concept. With it all, he was one of the greatest lyricists of France and, though individual, he was typically French in his exquisite grace, power of imagination and indefinable charm. R. P.

A RESUME OF THE WORK OF THE FOUNDERS SOCIETY

At the Annual Meeting held on October 13th, a very pleasant program and reception was held for the members and their families.

Messrs. Julius H. Haass, Vincent D. Cliff, and Griffith Ogden Ellis were elected Trustees, Mr. Ellis for the term ending 1927 and the others for the term ending 1929.

At a subsequent meeting of the new Board of Trustees, held on October 21, officers were re-elected for the coming year, as follows: Mr. D. M. Ferry, Jr., President; Mr. Hal H. Smith, Vice-President; Mr. William J. Gray, Treasurer; Mr. Clyde H. Burroughs, Secretary.

Through the membership funds and through individual gifts, more than \$150,000 worth of art objects have been added to the Institute collections during the past year, including fifteen paintings, seventeen pieces of sculpture, three rugs (one of which is Mr. Edsel Ford's famous silk animal and hunting rug), twenty-one pieces of ceramics, fifty-one etchings, and ten miscellaneous objects of decorative art. These new accessions were marked with rosettes, at the annual meeting so that the members could see the substantial result of the past year's work.

It is quite amazing to note what the collective power of small donations can achieve. On July 1, 1924, there was a balance in this fund of \$3,588.40; the receipts from membership dues and miscellaneous sources during the year brought this up to \$61,648.89. During the year \$41,710 was spent for purchases of art objects and \$175 for prizes for the Michigan Artists Exhibition. The maintenance and operation of the Membership Department cost for salaries, telephones, furniture and equipment, auditing and sundries. \$14,911.15. This is a very great reduction over the cost of maintaining this department during its initial year, and considering that it includes the salaries of eight regular employees and two part time employees (to say nothing of the large telephone bills), it is a very modest cost. It is a matter of congratulation to all of us that the percentage of cost is less in the Founders Society than in the Membership Departments of museums in other cities, largely through the readiness with which the members respond to their obligations.

From January 1 to July 1, 1925, the Membership Department has taken in a total of 2,532 members, of which 852 are new members and 1,680 are renewals. It is a satisfaction to record that there are this year fewer defections in the ranks of old members, and an increasing number of new members that more than make up for the small losses.

There have also been added to the Donors Roll during the past year the following life-members of the Corporation, whose contributions to the Founders Society total more than \$1,000.00:

William E. Scripps Mrs. J. B. Schlotmann Mrs. James Couzens Mr. Albert Kahn Mr. Julius Haass Mrs. Julius H. Haass Mr. Edgar B. Whitcomb Mr. Joseph Brummer Mr. Dirkran Kelekian Mr. F. Kleinberger Mr. Paul Bottenwieser Mr. Julius Golschmidt Mr. Vincent D. Cliff Dr. Wm. R. Valentiner Mrs. John D. Rochefeller, Jr. Mr. A. S. Drey Mr. Julius Boehler

There is also one new Fellow, whose contribution totals more than the \$5,000 for this class, namely Sir Joseph Duveen, and two benefactors, whose contributions exceeded the \$10,000 requirement for this class of membership, viz: Mr. Edsel B. Ford and Mrs. Horace Dodge.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

EXHIBITS

Nov. 11-26th, Thumb Tack Club Exhibit-Architecture,

EVENTS

Nov. 1, Sunday, 3:30 P. M.	"Greek Life and Art in the Golden Days." Illu	us-
	trated lecture by Professor Charles Martin.	

Nov. 10, Tuesday, 8:15 P. M.	"Art: Fine, Industrial and Otherwise-Our Pres-					
	ent	Problem."	Illustrated	lecture	by	Frank
	Alva	h Parsons.				

Nov. 15, Sunday, 5:50 P. M.	Paris through the Ages.	Autochromes by Pro-
	fessor William Sandoz.	
Nov. 16. Monday, 4-6 P. M.	Teachers College Course-	-French Art, "La Style

Saturday mornings at 9:30 A. M., Children's Scholarship Sketch Class. Mrs. William N. Miller, Critic.

Friday evenings at 7:30 P. M. Free Sketch Class. Recreation Commission.

Museum open daily from 9 A. M.-5 P. M. Sundays 2-6 P. M. Open Friday Evenings from 7:30-9:30 P. M.

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